



Maricopa County

News Release

Department of Public Health

1825/45 E. Roosevelt St.
Phoenix, AZ 85006
Phone: 602-506-6900
Fax: 602-506-6885
[www.maricopa.gov/public
_health](http://www.maricopa.gov/public_health)

For additional information: Emily Poland, Public Information Specialist, (602) 506-6607

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***media note:** Join us for a class, and learn the experiences of actual participants.

Spanish class: 9:30 to 11 a.m., Dec. 20 at Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc., 3216 W. Van Buren St.

English class: 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Dec. 29 at Big Brothers/Big Sisters, 1010 E. McDowell LL4.

Public Health program empowers people for a healthier tomorrow

(Phoenix) – Just in time for those New Year's Resolutions! A new program helping men and women ages 13 and up understand the risks of chronic diseases, is available through the Maricopa County Department of Public Health.

Together for Health is a free weekly program primarily targeting minority populations and those with low income or limited education. Facilitated by a registered dietician and a certified health educator who travel anywhere in Maricopa County, it will address issues of tobacco use, and achieving a healthy weight through proper nutrition, exercise and stress management. Classes are available in both English and Spanish.

"We want to empower people to embrace healthy lifestyles for themselves and their families," said Ms. Toby Urvater, Director of the Health Promotion and Education office of the Maricopa County Department of Public Health. "Our hope is that participants will learn how to better reduce stress, increase physical activity and make healthier food choices in their daily lives."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Center for Health Statistics, physical inactivity and unhealthy eating are the underlying causes responsible for at least 400,000 preventable deaths each year. In 2002, the cost of obesity alone in the United States was more than \$200 billion.

Research shows that people with limited education and financial support are more likely to smoke cigarettes, be physically inactive, and eat poorly.

"Only 33 percent of adults, ages 18 years and older participate in moderate physical activity on a regular basis," Urvater said. "By 2010 we hope that statistic can increase to 50 percent. We have a way to go to make this happen."

To become a host site or to enroll in the *Together for Health Program*, contact the Maricopa County Department of Public Health at (602) 506-6850 for more information. This program is made possible through a grant from the Arizona Department of Health Services

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